



Muslim civilians approach as C Troop, 1-4 CAV mans Checkpoint Charlie, in the Zone of Separation.

A Framework for Peace Operations

by Major Sean B. MacFarland

Square Pegs and Round Holes. Despite their recognition of a new era of peace operations, neither FM 100-5, *Operations*, nor FM 100-23, *Peace Operations*, provides us with a framework for conceptualizing this new form of military endeavor. This is an understandable omission, given the complexity and variety that characterize peace operations. To be sure, the authors of the newest FM 100-5 admitted that the venerable AirLand Battle (ALB) framework may no longer be the best choice for every situation, but they stopped short of proposing a new one. This gap in our doctrine has left many of us mentally genuflecting to the old “close, deep, and rear” trinity despite its growing irrelevance to some modern operations.

While preparing to deploy to Bosnia-Herzegovina for Operation Joint Endeavor, the leadership of the 3rd Squadron, 4th U.S. Cavalry gave up trying to pound the square peg of peace operations into the round hole of the ALB framework. Instead, we developed a peace operations framework (POF) that was tailored to implementing the Dayton Peace Accord in Bosnia in January 1996. Naturally, this framework won't work for every peace operation, but the thought process we used to develop it will.

The Right Tool for the Job. We wanted to have a framework. Frameworks focus our thoughts when we are developing operational concepts, saving time and helping to bring order out of the chaos of war or its aftermath. An inadequate or inappropriate framework can constrain our thinking, blinding us to both danger and opportunity. Our options were to use the ALB framework, some modification thereof, or to create our own framework from the ground up. We chose the last option.

Linearity vs. Non-Linearity: Linear areas of operations are characterized by relatively continuous lines of contact, separating well defined areas under either friendly or enemy control. Linear conditions arise where high force densities and/or low levels of mobility exist, even if only locally. Central Europe during the Cold War, the Korean Peninsula today, and Kuwait proper during DESERT STORM are examples of essentially linear battlefield conditions. The familiar “deep, close, and rear” areas are readily discernible in each of these cases, so the ALB framework fits them neatly. Of course, when we remove the “enemy” from the equation, we can no longer orient ourselves with these handy references to the line of contact. This makes Peace Operations almost automatically non-linear.

The Ole Gray Mare. During our planning for Operation Joint Endeavor, we quickly realized that the old ALB framework, which had been expressly developed to suit the conditions of a large scale, essentially linear, conflict in Central Europe, was probably not the appropriate framework for a non-linear environment like Bosnia. It would be like trying to use American football plays to win a soccer game under soccer rules. Although we entered Bosnia on a combat footing and were prepared for immediate combat operations, the ALB framework just didn't fit. First, we were neutral, so the conflict's final line of contact, the Agreed Cease Fire Line (ACFL) was not to be our limit of advance. We intended to operate freely on both sides of the ACFL. That had the effect of removing the basis of reference on the ground for close, deep, and rear areas. Secondly, we fully intended to dominate the Former Warring Factions command, control, communications, and information (C3I) systems had combat occurred. In

the early 1980s, the former Soviet General Staff predicted that new information technologies would cause “frontlines to disappear and terms such as ‘zones of combat’ will replace such outdated concepts as FEBA, FLOT, and FLET. No safe-havens or ‘deep rear’ will exist.”¹ Any combat operation in Bosnia would have most closely resembled the nearly simultaneous “take down” of the Panamanian Defense Forces in 1989. As one observer described that operation,

“Panama was not a neat linear battlefield. Although, at the operational level, boundaries were assigned during the initial operations, they were of little value. The battlefield more resembled a lethal mosaic of separate attacks conducted by land, sea, and air from the four points of the compass.”²

After discarding any FLOT-based framework, we began to look for other options. Regrettably, after acknowledging that new frameworks would be needed to cope with the emerging trends represented by those operations, the authors of FM 100-5 called it a day.³ They failed to provide any alternative framework for non-linear operations, in wars or in “other than wars.” So, we were on our own.

What's in a Name? We had the option of stretching the old ALB framework's definitions to fit a new situation. We could have redefined “rear” to mean support activities. “Close” could have meant current operations, or it could have referred to the zone of separation (ZOS). We might have used “deep” to describe future operations, or CA/PSYOPS activities, or operations outside of the ZOS. But then, why give new, less accurate names to things? It seemed that this would only confuse matters. After all, Task Force Eagle

demonstrated its neutrality by placing "rear" type activities on both sides of the ZOS. There were brigade headquarters and base camps on each side. "Deep" also lost much of its meaning in Bosnia. Long term threats to the force did not necessarily originate far from IFOR facilities; they were sometimes as "close" as the local nationals working inside our own perimeters. IFOR units roamed across the entire AOR, conducting vast numbers of simultaneous operations, linked by a command and control architecture vastly superior to those of the former warring factions (FWFs). The use of the old ALB terms under such conditions would have been at best sub-optimal, at worst, downright misleading. When we began to throw around terms like "close, deep, and rear" or another favorite, "center of gravity," in ways in which they were not originally intended, those terms began to mean too many things to too many people. As a result, these terms, coined as the language of our warfighting doctrine, became dangerously and potentially fatally, imprecise. We decided to avoid them when discussing non-combat operations.

The Peace Operations Framework: Because spatial references tend to obscure, rather than clarify, what is occurring under non-linear conditions, a more function-based reference system seemed to be what we needed for our POF. After conducting our mission analysis, it was clear that our mission essential task list (METL) could be reduced to two categories: operations in direct support of the Dayton General Framework Agreement for Peace (GFAP) and operations in support of ourselves. A task in either category might be designated the main effort under the appropriate conditions. The result of this simple thought process led us to design a framework based on *treaty operations*, *support operations*, and a designated *main effort* within one of these categories. These elements of the framework reside in the *operations space*, which is surrounded by an *influence space*.

Influence Space: The outermost region of the framework is the *influence space*, which is based on the new doctrinal term, "battlespace." Battlespace links operations within an AO to relevant events and places far beyond its boundaries, in the air, in space, at sea, and on land. It is three-dimensional, portable, and applicable at all levels of command.⁴ Clearly though, battles are

not fought throughout the battlespace. Ideally, in peace operations, they are not fought at all. This discrepancy can be rectified by blending "battlespace" with an older (1982) doctrinal term, "area of influence," yielding, "influence space." This term retains the multi-dimensional flavor of the 1993 doctrine, but is more precise because influence, not battle, exists throughout the space. Also, and on a more practical level, the abbreviation of influence space (IS) is less unfortunate than that of battlespace (BS). The IS is not assigned by a higher headquarters, so it has no boundary. It can extend back to the ports of embarkation or the home stations of forces that are deploying into the operations space. Our IS extended back from Bosnia, through Hungary, where we occasionally had to send helicopters for intermediate level aviation maintenance, to our rear detachment in Schweinfurt, Germany.

Operations Space: Within the IS, is the assigned *operations space* (OS). Unlike the IS, it has a defined boundary. The OS is merely a three-dimensional version of a traditional AO. For 3-4 Cav, our OS extended beyond our ground sector to include the entire 2BCT sector and the Russian brigade sector. This is because our ground troops were initially dispersed across the entire 2BCT sector until all task forces closed into their respective sectors. We also conducted joint patrols with the forces on our flanks, the Russians in the north, and TF 4-12 to our south. Finally, our 16 OH58Ds were responsible for conducting aerial patrols over both the 2BCT and Russian brigade sectors. It was within the OS that the squadron conducted its treaty and support operations.

Treaty Operations: We assessed the following tasks as directly supporting the GFAP. The assessment was, of course, subjective and as such, it is open to reinterpretation. In fact, the task list changed over the course of the squadron's deployment. The list was reanalyzed at each milestone of the GFAP timeline. I strongly recommend that METLs during any sort of peace operation be periodically reviewed. The presence of the peace operations force should and will affect the environment it enters, causing initial facts and assumptions to change.

- **Reconnaissance and Surveillance** to monitor GFAP compliance. This had a collateral benefit to force protection, and doubled as a force presence task.

- **Force Presence Operations** to secure areas of transfer and separate FWFs.

- **Freedom of Movement Operations** to enforce the right of IFOR and civilians to move freely in Bosnia. Observation posts, checkpoints, and patrols were the most visible method of conducting this task. PSYOPS teams talking to civilians and CA teams talking to police were just as important.

- **Information Operations** to explain GFAP provisions for area transfers and other issues. Our PSYOPS team was a source of two-way information flow. Their reports of how the latest IFOR information products were received were invaluable in calculating local moods and attitudes.

- **Mine Clearance Team Escort** to allow FWFs to clear mines in the ZOS. This task eventually petered out as the FWFs deactivated their engineers faster than they deactivated or cleared their old minefields.

- **Civil Affairs Operations** to ensure orderly area transfer and facilitate a return to normalcy. This also encompassed a wide range of other activities, to include assessments of various villages throughout the squadron sector. We also occasionally did CA assessments in the Russian sector because of the tight linkage some villages in the Sapna Thumb region to our north had with those in the Tuzla Valley in our sector.

- **FWF Assessments** to allow the squadron to influence faction compliance with GFAP provisions. Our counter-intelligence team, along with troop commanders, and others who had frequent contact with FWF officers, were our principal assets in this arena.

- **Humanitarian Assistance Operations** to coordinate NGO and PVO activity within the squadron sector. The CA team's area assessments often identified local needs that NGOs or PVOs could fill. The response of these organizations built credibility for the squadron among the local nationals. An occasional medevac also qualifies as humanitarian assistance. Engineer work to improve key routes can also assist the locals return to normalcy as a collateral benefit.

- **Support to International Criminal Tribunal, Yugoslavia (ICTY) Inspectors** grew as a mission as thaws in the spring of 1996 revealed more and more evidence of mass murders in the wake

of Srebrenica's fall in July 1995. This generally required the positioning of a quick reaction force (QRF) and artillery to support it. The QRF remained out of sight of the inspection team, but within radio range of a military liaison officer at the inspection site.

- **Support to International Police Task Force (IPTF)** increased along with the size of the IPTF. This included contingency plans to rescue IPTF members from hostage situations, co-operating in investigations, and other work with FWF police forces, and providing some quality of life support.

Support Operations: These operations enable the force to conduct its peace operations tasks. The line between peace operations and support operations is not always clear, but that isn't important. The key is to provide everyone with a common frame of reference to eliminate confusion during daily operations.

- **Force Protection** consisted of *lodgment area security, convoy operations*, and the *quick reaction force*, both aerial and ground.

- **Communications Support** was key to maintaining the ability to synchronize operations and to concentrate stabilizing assets at the decisive point quickly.

- **Route Clearance** to classify and clear key routes was essential to all other operations.

- **CSS Operations** included all the normal elements of sustainment plus a new one: *quality of life support*. As you can imagine, this grew in importance as the deployment progressed and was critical to maintaining high morale.

The Main Effort: When developing a new framework, it is best to begin with the fundamentals. As Jomini discovered, the "fundamental" principle of war is to concentrate and apply maximum combat power at the decisive point.⁵ We believed that this principle could be safely extended to peace operations. As a fundamental principle, it immediately establishes a useful frame of reference. Because the *main effort* is (or should be) at the decisive point, it was a logical choice for one of our framework's elements.

In combat operations, the main effort consists of whichever elements of combat power (leadership, firepower, maneuverability, and protection) are concentrated at the decisive point.⁶ The decisive point against which this combat

power is concentrated may not be a single place, but a dispersed function, like command and control or air defense.

In peace operations, we concentrate "stabilizing assets" instead of combat power at the decisive point. Certainly, combat power is a significant stabilizing asset, but it is just one of many. Stabilizing assets can include, among other things, civil affairs teams, PSYOPS teams, MPs, counter-intelligence teams, engineers, medics, transportation assets, interpreters, and key leaders. As in non-linear combat operations, the decisive point may be a dispersed function, such as public opinion or force protection.

The main effort can be either a treaty operations task or a support operations task. It depends on the decisive point, which will shift over time. When the squadron first entered Bosnia, the ACFL was the decisive point, and the separation of the FWFs was the main effort, clearly a treaty operations task. Once the FWFs had been moved out of the ZOS, the decisive point shifted to the area of transfer within the squadron's sector.

Civil affairs efforts in this area became the main effort as the squadron worked to ensure a smooth transfer of this politically sensitive area from the control of one FWF to another. Once the transfer was completed and the Inter-Entity Boundary Line (IEBL) was established, the decisive point shifted to the credibility of the GFAP outside of the ZOS. As a result, the main effort shifted to ensuring freedom of movement of both IFOR and civilians across the IEBL. After all FWF forces had moved to their cantonment areas, the security of IFOR elements in sector became the decisive point. A single casualty-producing incident against a vulnerable convoy or installation could undermine IFOR's credibility among the FWFs, leading to renewed hostilities and demands from some in Washington, D.C. to pull out of Bosnia. As a result, the main effort shifted to force protection, which is a support operation.

It's the Thought Process that Counts. The 3-4 Cav peace operations framework has worked well for the squadron's operations in Bosnia as a part of Task Force Eagle. It's probably far from perfect, but I don't think that matters. The important thing is that we found a system for organizing our plan-

ning under unique, and non-linear circumstances.

This framework will probably not work for other units in other types of peace operations for a host of reasons that I can't even imagine. But, by understanding the thought process we used to develop our framework, other units will be able to develop their own tailored framework whenever and wherever needed. That's why I don't advocate adding this framework to our doctrine. Instead, I would rather see our doctrine include a methodology for developing frameworks for non-linear, peace-oriented operations, and I believe that 3-4 Cav's methodology is a step in that direction.

Notes

¹Lester W. Grau, "Soviet Non-Linear Combat: The Challenge of the 90's," (Foreign Military Studies Office Study, September 1990), p. 2.

²William C. Bennett, "JUST CAUSE and the Principles of War," *Military Review*, 3 (March 1991), p. 11-12.

³U.S. Department of the Army, *Operations*, Field Manual 100-5, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1993), p. 6-12.

⁴Field Manual 100-5, pp. 6-12-13.

⁵Antoine-Henri de Jomini, "Summary of the Art of War," in *Roots of Strategy: Book 2*, ed. J. D. Hittle, (Harrisburg, Pa.: Stackpole, 1987), p. 461.

⁶Field Manual 100-5, pp. 2-10-11.

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